

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06
PRS-01 /054 W
-----261505Z 125137 /53

P R 261116Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9956
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO
USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 3166

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: VIEWS OF FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ

1. DURING A PRIVATE LUNCHEON CONVERSATION WITH THE CHARGE
ON APRIL 25, FRANCISCO FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE
PARTIDO SOCIAL DEMOCRATA (PSD) AND A LEADER OF CENTRO
DEMOCRATICO, EXUDED ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THE CENTRO'S ELECTORAL
PROSPECTS (30-40PERCENT OF THE TOTAL, HE THOUGHT) AS THE RESULT
OF WHAT HE TERMED SUAREZ' DECISION TO PRESENT HIMSELF AT
THE HEAD OF CENTRO'S MADRID LIST FOR THE LOWER HOUSE.
ACCORDING TO ORDONEZ, THIS DECISION WOULD BE ANNOUNCED
AFTER SUAREZ RETURNED FORM HIS US TRIP, POSSIBLY AS LATE
AS MAY 7 (THE EVE OF THE LAST DAY FOR PRESENTATION OF CANDIDACIES).

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2. FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ VIEWED THE SURPRISE RESIGNATION OF
PUBLIC WORKS MINISTER CALVO SOTELO IN ORDER TO PARTIC-
IPATE IN THE CONTEST AS A MASTER STROKE ON SUAREZ' PART.
THE CALVO SOTELO NAME (THE MURDER OF HIS UNCLE, A CON-
SERVATIVE CORTES DEPUTY, IN 1936 SET IN TRAIN EVENTS
WHICH CULMINATED IN THE CIVIL WAR) IDENTIFIED WITH
THE CENTRO WOULD BRING A WINDFALL OF CONSERVATIVE

SUPPORT THE CENTRO WHICH MIGHT OTHERWISE HAVE GONE TO FRAGA'S ALIANZA POPULAR (AP).

3. FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ WAS QUITE CANDID IN POINTING OUT THAT, WITHOUT SUAREZ' DIRECT SUPPORT, THE CENTRO WOULD HAVE BEEN IN SERIOUS ELECTORAL TROUBLE; WITH IT, HE ESTIMATED IT WOULD EASILY BE THE PLURALITY COALITION. IN FACT, HE FLAGGED THE DIFFICULTY CENTRO WOULD FACE IN PORTRAYING ITSELF AS A COALITION COLLABORATING WITH SUAREZ, RATHER THAN ONE BEING USED BY HIM, AS A SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL PROBLEM AND ONE WHICH COULD AFFECT THE LEGITIMACY OF THE CONTEST. HE HAD PARTICULARLY HARSH WORDS FOR AP, REFERRING TO IT AT ONE POINT AS "FASCIST", AND WAS CRITICAL OF HIS OWN COALITION PARTNER, PARTIDO POPULAR (PP), ECHOING GIL ROBLES' REPORTED CONTENTIONS (MADIRD 3114) THAT IT WAS MADE UP OF OPPORTUNISTS, ITS PROVINCIAL LEVEL PEOPLE WERE TOO FAR RIGHT, AND IT HAD NO DEFINABLE PARTY LINE.

4. THE RUIZ GIMENEZ/GIL ROBLES CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WERE TO GIVE THEIR FINAL ANSWER CONCERNING A CD-CENTRO ELECTORAL COALITION THE AFTERNOON OF APRIL 25. FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ DID NOT KNOW WHAT THAT ANSWER WOULD BE, NOT DID HE APPEAR CONCERNED EITHER WAY. (SOME OTHERS IN THE CENTRO WERE CONCERNED, HE SAID, OVER THE PROSPECTIVE OVER-POPULATION OF THE CENTRO AND THE DIFFICULTIES IT RAISED FOR ELECTORAL LIST DRAFTING.) WHATEVER THE CD'S DECIDED, FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ BELIEVED THAT A POST-ELECTION COALITION GROUPING THE CENTRO, THE CONFIDENTIAL

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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND CENTRIST ELEMENTS FROM CATALONIA (PUJOL, TRIAS FARGAS AND CANELLAS) WOULD BE ABLE TO FORM A GOVT, EVEN IF A MINORITY ONE, WITH TACIT SOCIALIST (PSOE) SUPPORT. HE THOUGH ANY CENTRO-AP POST-ELECTION COALITION OUT OF THE QUESTION IN VIEW OF AP'S INCREASINGLY STRIDENT POSTURE AND WHAT HE TERMED ITS "OPPOSITION TO THE KING," BUT HE DID NOT RULE OUT THAT MORE CENTRIST AP ELEMENTS (UNSPECIFIED) WOULD BREAK AWAY TO COOPERATE WITH THE CENTRO AFTER ELECTIONS.

5. LOOKING BEYOND ELECTIONS--AND ASIDE FROM CONSTITUTION-DRAFTING--FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ SAW THE ELABORATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ECONOMIC/SOCIAL STABILIZATION PLAN AS ESSENTIAL. HE SAID HIS STAFF OF ECONOMISTS HAD ALMOST COMPLETED A DRAFT TWO-YEAR PLAN WHICH WOULD, INTER ALIA, ATTEMPT TO REDUCE INFLATION TO ABOUT 12PERCENT FROM ITS CURRENT LEVEL, WHICH HE ESTIMATED AS SOME 30PERCENT, WHILE ALSO DEALING WITH UNEMPLOYMENT. AS HE PUT IT, JUST AS IT HAD TAKEN A "FRANCOIST"--

SUAREZ-- TO DISMANTLE THE FRANCO SYSTEM, SO IT WOULD HAVE TO BE LEADERS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS WHO TOOK THE LEAD IN IMPLEMENTING THOSE FINANCIAL REFORMS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH A BROADER CONSENSUS ON SPAIN'S ECONOMIC SYSTEM. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HE MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT HE PREFERRED NOT TO TAKE ON THE THANKLESS TASK OF FINANCE MINISTER IN THE NEW GOVT, BUT HE RELUCTANTLY ADMITTED THAT HE MIGHT WELL BE THE ONLY ONE SUFFICIENTLY TRUSTED BY THE BANKING ESTABLISHMENT AND MORE CONSERVATIVE SECTORS GENERALLY TO GET THEM TO BITE THE BULLET.

6. IN OTHER SPECULATION REGARDING THE GOVERNMENT AFTER ELECTIONS HE HAD CANELLAS (WHO HE SAID HAD BECOME CLOSE TO SUAREZ), ALVAREZ DE MIRANDA, GARRIGUES WALKER, MORODO, TRIAS FARGAS, AND CALVO SOTELO AS WELL AS HIMSELF BECOMING MINISTERS. HE EXPECTED GUTIERREZ MELLADO, CONFIDENTIAL

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OREJA AND LAVILLA TO STAY, BUT DID NOT SPECIFY ANY OTHERS WHO HE THOUGHT WOULD REMAIN. HE THOUGH RUIZ GIMENEZ MIGHT RUN FOR THE SENATE AND BECOME PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.EATON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, PARTY LEADERS, ELECTION FORECASTS, POLITICAL SITUATION, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977MADRID03166
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770145-0307
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770419/aaaaapza.tel
Line Count: 143
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f9901c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2693015
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIEWS OF FERNANDEZ ORDONEZ
TAGS: PINT, SP, PSD, (ORDONEZ, FRANCISCO FERNANDEZ)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f9901c9f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009